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## Senate

The Senate met at 10:02 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a Senator from the State of Montana.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal spirit, the fountain of wisdom and strength, we praise You for the gift of this day. You sustain us with the strength we need to fulfill Your purposes for such a time as this. Lead our lawmakers to new levels of wisdom, providing them with faith for their perplexities, insights for their decisions, and light for the path ahead.

Lord, use our Senators this day as instruments of Your powerful providence. Replenish the wells of their spirit with Your peace that passes understanding. Hear our prayer, O Lord. Incline Your ears to us and give us Your peace.

We pray in Your faithful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY). The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, September 16, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a

Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. WALSH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### BANK ON STUDENTS EMERGENCY LOAN REFINANCING ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 409, S. 2432.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 409, S. 2432, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans, and for other purposes.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m. today. During that period of time, Senators will be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

Following morning business, the Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m., to allow for weekly caucus meetings. At 2:15 p.m. the Senate will proceed to rollcall votes on confirmation of the Baran and Burns nominations, followed by several voice votes on executive nominations.

### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time between 3 p.m. and

4 p.m. today be under the control of the majority and the time from 4 p.m. until 5 p.m. be under the control of the Republicans.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### A FLAWED APPROACH

Mr. President, the 18th century French philosopher Voltaire once said:

One day everything will be well, that is our hope. Everything's fine today, that is our illusion.

There is no better portrayal of the Republican Party's flawed approach to governance than what Voltaire said. Senate Republicans deceive themselves by thinking their obstruction is good for the Nation, that the status quo is helping American families. Meanwhile, the Republicans are out stumping and promising the American people that if they just put Republicans in charge, everything will be better. What are those promises based on? Certainly not recent history.

Let's take a look at what Republicans in this body have done for American families: Republicans have blocked the Paycheck Fairness Act not once, not twice, not even three times but four times, thereby preventing American women from receiving a fair wage for their work. Remember, this is simply making it possible for a woman who does the exact same work as a man to get paid the exact same amount of money. Republicans have blocked legislation to prevent companies from denying their workers specific health benefits, including birth control, as required by Federal law.

Republicans also blocked a bill allowing Americans with student debt to refinance their loans at lower interest rates. The student loan debt stands at \$1.3 trillion. It is higher than credit card debt. It is higher than any other debt.

Republicans rejected an increase in the minimum wage, essentially relegating millions of hard-working

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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